

RIVER FALLS
WILDCATS™
Youth
FOOTBALL

River Falls Youth Football Association
2018 Player & Parent
Information and Expectations
Handbook



Message from the Board

Welcome to what should serve as a positive and exciting experience for your son or daughter. We, the Board of Directors of the River Falls Youth Football Association, have put together an information and expectations package for you, in the hopes of helping you to better understand the program with which your child is involved. Our goal is to produce fine people first and good football players second, as football is an excellent tool for teaching fundamental and important life skills.

This handbook is a look into what the River Falls Youth Football Association Board of Directors deems to be the important facets of our football program. Youth football should be a positive and memorable experience for all involved.

Thank you for partnering with the River Falls Youth Football program. We look forward to another great Youth Football season.

Philosophy Statement

The River Falls Youth Football Association exists for the purpose of teaching each child the fundamental skills and concepts of the game of football while having fun. In addition, the Association strives to encourage teamwork, fair play and provide a framework for the wholesome participation at each child's playing ability. Children will be encouraged to develop good sportsmanship, self confidence and respect for themselves and others. The attainment of exceptional athletic ability and winning is not the goal of this league, but will result from the above.



Important Links

RF Youth Football Home Page	www.riverfallsfootball.com/youth
RF Youth Football Facebook Page	https://www.facebook.com/RFYouthFootball
RF Youth Football Twitter Page	https://twitter.com/RFYouthFootball
RF Football Home Page	http://riverfallsfootball.com

List of Key Events

Event	Date	Description
First Night of Practice	08/09/18	All practices will be held at Meyer Middle School on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The length and frequency of practices may decrease as the school year starts, the amount of daylight decreases, and the season progresses. This is at each coach's discretion. Please talk directly to your child's coach if you have questions. During practices we will be running players through drill stations the first few weeks of practice. During these drill stations players are evaluated so we can divide the teams up as evenly as possible.
Parent Orientation	08/09/18	Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend the parent meeting at 6:15 p.m. in the Meyer Middle School auditorium. RFYFA board members will review the program, player and parent expectations, and answer questions.
Wildcat Football Community Picnic	08/11/18	Wildcat Football Picnic (including all players and families from 1st grade to Varsity) at 4:00 at Hoffman Park. We have reserved the building near the Tri Angels Playground for serving food. We will have hot dogs, brats, chips, cookies and drinks. There are some picnic tables in the park, but please feel free to bring your own chairs for extra seating. We will ask for a donation of \$5.00 per person to help cover the cost of the picnic.
Scrimmage During Halftime of Wildcats Game	08/17/18	This is one of the highlight events of the season. During a River Falls Wildcat home game, Head Wildcat Football Coach Crail invites the RFYFA players to run out on the field at halftime, scrimmage each other, and be recognized for their involvement with River Falls Youth Football.



RF Wildcats Youth Football Camp	08/18/18	The philosophy of Coach Crail's one day, two-hour non-contact camp is to provide solid fundamental football skills in a safe and fun environment. The High School coaches and players will teach techniques for both offense and defense. Camp is for 1 st through 8 th graders. Visit riverfallsfootball.com to register
Teams Announced	08/21/18	The first couple weeks of practice will be used for evaluating players for team placement. This is not a tryout; all kids will be placed on a team. Once teams are formed, we will announce them at practice. All coaches will be given a list of player's names, phone numbers and email addresses based on what was submitted during the online registration.
First Game	09/08/18	All games will be on Saturday mornings at 10:00 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. on the same fields where practices take place. The schedule of all games will be posted on the riverfallsfootball.com website once finalized.
Picture Day	09/15/18	Team and individual pictures will be taken prior to your game. As we get close to picture day we will hand out picture packets along with a picture day schedule. We ask that every player gets a picture taken, but we do not require that you purchase any pictures.
Practice with the Falcons	09/18/18	For those of you new to the program, this is always a fun event. The UWRF football team invites us to practice/scrimmage with them at Ramer Field.
Coaches Appreciation	TBD	This is an event for RFYFA volunteer coaches and their significant others. Every year we host a Coaches Appreciation event to say Thank You to the coaches for volunteering their time and patience.
End of Year Banquet	10/13/18	The end of the year banquet is held during the last game of the year. The RFYFA provides hotdogs and treats for you and your families to enjoy after your child's last game of the season.

Communication to Parents

The River Falls Youth Football Association will make every attempt to keep our players and their parents/guardians up to date on anything related to the youth football program and upcoming events. We have four ways of communicating with parents and players. They are email, website, Facebook and Twitter.

- Please be sure that your email is updated during player registration. If you feel that you are not receiving emails from RFYFA, please email us at rfyouthfootball@gmail.com and ask to have your email address added to our distribution list.
- Please refer to the website regularly. Important information is available including game schedules, program updates, meetings, calendar updates, etc. (riverfallsfootball.com/youth)
- Sign up, follow and like our Facebook and/or Twitter pages to receive RFYFA Football messages and updates.



Parent Expectations

Be positive with your athlete. Let them know you are proud they are part of the team. Focus on the benefits of teamwork and personal discipline.

Encourage your athlete to follow all rules. Help the coaches build a commitment to the team. Set a good example in your personal lifestyle.

Allow your athlete to perform and progress at a level consistent with his/her ability. Athletes mature at different ages; some progress earlier than others.

Insist on positive behavior in school and a high level of performance in the classroom. Numerous studies indicate extracurricular involvement helps enhance academic performance.

Cheer for our team and players. Opponents and referees deserve respect. Realize that players, coaches and referees will make mistakes. Your support is needed during these times.

Promote having fun. Having fun is so important at this age in order for the kids to learn and grow.

An athlete's self-confidence and self-image will be improved by support at home. Encourage your child to do their best and to have fun.

Winning is fun, but building character is most important. The concept of working together to perform a task will have lasting benefits. Winning takes place when all the little things are done correctly.

Athletes need to attend practices, games and team events. Stress the necessity to make a commitment to the team.

Emphasize the importance of well-balanced meals and regular sleep patterns. An athlete functions best when care is taken to consume nutritious food and obtain sufficient rest.



Expectations of Our Coaches

The function of a coach is to educate the kids through participation in the RYFA. All RYFA coaches must realize the game is played for the benefit of the participants/kids. An emphasis will be placed on developing lifelong values. Coaches are role models and will set positive examples for players, parents, and spectators. The coach shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

Be a positive role model. As a coach you shall uphold the honor and dignity of Coaching. In all personal contact with the children, officials, parents, and the public, each coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct. Carry yourself in a professional manner at all times, on the field and in the community. Players and community members are always watching, as a representative of the program your actions will reflect on everyone, not just yourself. Make sure your interactions on the field reflect how you would want your own child to be treated.

Communicate. A football program consists of many parts, it is important that everyone works hard to stay on the same page. All coaches should make sure to communicate to their teams parents on a weekly basis. It is important that coaches, parents and players are all on the same page. Coaches need to be approachable if a player or parent wants to talk.

Coach every player. “Kids won’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” We coach players to help prepare them to achieve their greatest potential. Each player is putting in the time and effort to make the team better and it is the responsibility of the coach to help the player improve their skills.

Commitment. It is expected that coaches shall know the contest rules and teach them to his or her team members. A coach will not seek an advantage by bending or ignoring the rules. We ask our players to invest a lot of time into this program and therefore the same commitment is needed from each coach. In turn, the program will try to place a priority on using time wisely during meetings, practices, and team activities.

Coaches will be required to pass a background check and will be required to participate in the “Coaches Certification” meeting that is held before the beginning of the season.



Player Expectations

As a player I will...

- Have fun
- Have a positive attitude and never quit
- Practice and play to the best of my ability
- Respect my coach, teammates and opponents
- Respect officials and accept their decisions without question
- Only give positive encouragement to fellow teammates
- Arrive prepared for all games and practices with a proper mental attitude and equipment
- Learn and obey the Rules of the Game
- Win without boasting and always display sportsmanship
- Practice football skills, condition, play and practice on my own, outside of practice
- Notify the coach if I will be late or unable to make a practice or game

As a player I will NEVER...

- Allow my enthusiasm and commitment for football to override my responsibilities to my education
- Use profane or vulgar language
- Leave the game or practice without the permission of the coach
- Disregard any instructions of my coach
- Forget that I represent River Falls Youth Football

Attendance

All players are expected to be present and on time to practice. If a player is not able to make practice the parent must contact their coach to let them know that the player will not be attending practice. It is important that parents arrive for pick up prior to the end of practice. There are times that practice will end early, so it is important that you are there to pick up your child once practice has finished.



Equipment

All players must come to every practice with a mouth guard, non-metal cleats/tennis shoes, and a water bottle. Players will be playing flag football and will NOT be wearing hard shell helmets. Players are allowed to wear soft shell helmets, receiver gloves and similar equipment accessories.

RFYFA coaches will provide players with practice flags each practice and game flags each game. The registration price for each athlete covers two game shirts, one pair of game shorts, and game flags for each player.

Program Alignment

The River Falls Youth Football Association has created a plan for specific items we would like to be able to focus on at each grade level. These plans were created to help coaches and parents understand what the youth athletes should be learning and working on at each level. We researched and gathered information from other national groups like USA Football, NFL Flag, UA Flag, Pop Warner Football, etc. and modified it to represent River Falls Youth Football.



Youth Football: More Than Just a Game

River Falls Youth Football really is more than “just a game”. We want your child to be able to learn the game of football in a safe and fun environment, but we also want them to experience more than just football. We feel that youth football and other youth sports help children to learn many life lessons.

The River Falls School District has been promoting their Leading with Character program (see right) and we feel that youth football also helps your children build on those same character traits. Here is how we feel River Falls Youth Football can help your child build on the River Falls School District’s 9 Positive Character Traits.



We also feel that youth sports help promote and build upon the following:

Friendships – Lifetime relationships are developed through participation in youth sports.

Better Grades – Numerous studies indicate students active in school activities perform better in the classroom.

Success in Life – According to the American College Testing Service, participating in school activities and sports is a major indicator of success later in life.

Work Ethic – Each age group is different, but it is important to always work hard and never give up.

Enthusiasm – In order to be successful and have fun, both football and life must be approached with enthusiasm.

These are all great lessons to learn through youth sports, but these things won't happen unless your child is **HAVING FUN** and you as a parent are positively supporting them, their teammates and their coaches.

